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SKETCH

OF THE

JAMES TWEED FAMILY,

WILMINGTON, MASS.,

BY BENJ. WALKER.

READ AT A

FAMILY REUNION,

FOSTER'S POND, ANDOVER, MASS., JUNE 17, 1887.

LOWELL, MASS.

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1887.

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Ray. Walker

July 28, 1887

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TWEED FAMILY.

NAME.	BORN.	DIED.
James Tweed,	May 19, 1771.	Dec. 2, 1850.
Sally (Gibson) Tweed,	May 29, 1775.	Dec. 19, 1861.

CHILDREN.

NAME.	BORN.	DIED.
Sally (Tweed) Buck,	Jan. 13, 1798.	Sept. 10, 1884.
James Tweed,	Aug. 27, 1800.	July 14, 1881.
Nancy (Tweed) Harnden,	May 27, 1802.	Apr. 2, 1885.
Abigail (Tweed) Walker,	Feb. 21, 1804.	March 28, 1855.
Samuel Tweed,	Apr. 7, 1806.	June 8, 1879.
Timothy Gibson Tweed,	Nov. 21, 1808.	Jan. 26, 1863.
Mary (Tweed) Jones,	Jan. 10, 1811.	
Charles Tweed,	March 21, 1813.	
Emmons Tweed,	July 23, 1817.	Dec. 25, 1858.

A very faint, light blue watermark-style illustration of a classical building with four columns and a pediment, centered in the background.

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REMINISCENCES OF THE TWEED FAMILY.

New England family reunions have assumed, of late, a character of much interest and importance. Serving, as they do, to renew friendships and more firmly cement the ties of kindred, especially when families are widely scattered and have been long separated, they gratify a desire which almost every person possessed of natural instincts must entertain, to participate, if possible, in some gathering wherein he may once more meet and mingle with his own immediate "kith and kin." Acting upon this idea, and with the conviction that family gatherings have become, at least, a religious duty, if not an absolute necessity, a few descendants of JAMES TWEED, formerly a well-known and highly respected citizen of Wilmington, Mass., decided to make an effort for the purpose of bringing the family together. To that end the following circular of invitation was issued:

REUNION OF THE TWEED FAMILY.

At a recent meeting of a few representatives of the Tweed family, it was decided to make arrangements for a family gathering and basket picnic, to be held during the summer of 1887. The undersigned, appointed for that

purpose, take pleasure in announcing that they have secured the grounds at

FOSTER'S POND, ANDOVER, MASS.,

Near the Wilmington line, for

FRIDAY, THE 17TH DAY OF JUNE,

(or Saturday, the 18th, should the 17th prove stormy) and cordially invite you and your family to be present.

It is hoped, through a general response, that this reunion may be made an occasion of special interest to every member of this family, and also afford an opportunity of renewing old-time friendships and acquaintances.

THOS. H. JONES,	}	Committee.
CHARLES BUCK,		
<i>Stoneham.</i>		
GILMAN HARNDEN,	}	Committee.
<i>Lawrence.</i>		
T. G. TWEED,	}	Committee.
BENJ. WALKER,		
<i>Lowell.</i>		

The arrangements for this gathering were made by the foregoing committee of invitation, under the immediate direction and supervision of Thomas H. Jones, chairman, —a grandson of James Tweed,—who infused great spirit into the affair, through his well known business energy and ability. To him, therefore, it is but an act of justice to record, are the descendants of the Tweed family mainly indebted for a movement which it is hoped may prove to be the initiative of many other equally interesting gatherings,

so beautiful in themselves, and which afford so much opportunity for the enjoyment of that which cannot fail to promote one common interest.

The day upon which this reunion was held proved to be in every way propitious. The sky was clear, a gentle June breeze pervaded the atmosphere, the shade trees at the point, on Foster's pond, were a charming protection from a scorching sun, and each individual, old and young, seemed inspired with the desire to make every one else happy. The time was passed in rowing, fishing, social intercourse, and singing, for which latter entertainment ample preparation was made. It is almost needless to add that the entire Tweed family are distinguished for their musical tastes and abilities, and many of them are noted for their professional excellence, both in vocal and instrumental music.

At noon a bountiful collation was provided, through the generous contributions made by the whole company, each particular "basket" being laden with most tempting edibles. Indeed, it was difficult to determine whether the food itself or the sub-committee of ladies who had arranged all with such exquisite taste, was entitled to the greater consideration. However that may have been, the former, at the moment, appealed by far the most powerfully to the appetite, while the latter had the unalloyed satisfaction of acknowledging the truth of the old adage that "Actions speak louder than words."

At the conclusion of the repast, Mr. Jones expressed the wish that a complete list of the names of all present be made, and a committee was appointed to attend to that duty. (The names are given on a subsequent page.)

Mr. Jones then stated that, in view of what had been accomplished at this time in bringing the Tweed family together, it would also seem desirable to place upon record any historical facts or reminiscences relating to the Tweed family, about which little was known, except by the very few immediate descendants now living. He then informed the company that Mr. Benj. Walker, of Lowell, had prepared a short sketch of the early life of Grandfather and Grandmother Tweed, including his personal recollections of those worthies, to which he would invite the attention of the company.

In response, Mr. Walker read the following paper:

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN:

Who of us has not looked forward to this gathering of the Tweed family with pleasurable emotions? Nearly every member of each branch of this family is present.

Anticipating that such would be the fact, the thought has occurred to me that a brief sketch of our worthy ancestors would not only be regarded with interest, but serve, in a measure, to perpetuate the names and memories of those for whom we all cherish so much affection. Perhaps it may also give the rising generation something, in a semi-historical way, that will not be easily forgotten.

With these ideas and these reflections, I have collated such facts and incidents as my somewhat limited resources have afforded, and, with your permission, will now submit the same for your consideration.

Although, so far as I have been able to learn, this branch of our ancestors made no claim to a strictly English lineage, they were, as certainly

the oldest of us know, most excellent and exemplary specimens of good, old-fashioned New England people. Pure and simple in their habits, firm and zealous in their religious notions, rigid in their ideas of living up to the golden rule, and looking upon that station in life in which it pleased God to place them as the one in which they were best fitted to serve Him, this eminently worthy couple, although without assuming any unusual degree of mental culture, were happy in themselves, happy in their families, and lived to a ripe old age. They died as they had lived, in the hope of a full fruition of the joys which they believed await those who walk humbly, and follow faithfully those precepts which are recognized as the true attributes which lead to immortal life.

James Tweed, son of James Tweed, was born in Burlington, Mass., on the 19th of May, 1771, and passed the earliest years of his life on a farm in that place, presumably receiving only the limited education which the district schools of those days afforded. When quite a lad, James left the paternal roof, doubtless to seek his fortune, and strayed away, not into the wilds

of the far west, but into the adjoining town of Wilmington, a place much more vivid in my early mind for the recollections of its hop-fields than for its commercial industries, and, as the saying then was, James "went out to work." His first engagement was with Major Jaquith, on what was later and perhaps is now known as the Sewall Buck Farm.

How easy it is to picture this young man, full of courage and hope, and perhaps looking forward with ambition to the grand rounding up of his manhood, at the rate of "ten dollars a month and found;" building castles of future wealth, and of the time when he, too, would be possessed of that goodly heritage of those days—a farm and a family of his own. How well his hopes were realized will be presently seen, for when yet quite a young man he purchased the old "Tweed homestead," as some of us remember it, although now, as it has been for years, the property of that estimable gentleman, Levi Manning.

While James was pursuing his vocation as a farmer, in the employ of Major Jaquith, there came into the family, by one of those happy coincidences peculiar to New England life, a

sprightly young miss, who had been engaged through friends of the family to take the position of house-girl or domestic in Mr. Jaquith's family. Her name was Sally Gibson, and the place of her nativity was Lunenburg, Mass. While James, therefore, was pursuing his avocation on the farm, Sally, no doubt, was equally active in her household duties and, as we can easily imagine, in bearing the burdens which devolved both upon the male and female members of the household. Who of us cannot realize the feelings of excitement which may have pervaded these young hearts, which beat in sympathy, even in a cow-yard when the milking time arrived, and who has not seen a stream of the lacteal fluid aimed squarely at the head of a near friend, to call attention to the fact that there was not only milk in the flowing pail, but also the "milk of human kindness" running to overflowing in the hearts of these young people? Imagine this young Lothario seated on a three-legged milking-stool, and Sally hiding her blushes beneath the ample folds of an old-fashioned yet immaculate sugar scooped sun bonnet — one of the feminine "field pieces" of those

days—and how easily do we see the budding of “Love’s young dream,” which so naturally ripened into a true and lasting affection.

At any rate, it was on this farm of which we speak that the alliance was formed between James Tweed and Sally Gibson, and which finally culminated in their marriage in the year 1798.

Notwithstanding that Sally Gibson proved to be the blushing bride, my story would not be quite complete, did I not record the fact that James was previously engaged to a young lady by the name of Abigail Carter, who died, however, during the days of her betrothal, and for whom an affectionate remembrance was maintained in naming my mother for her.

About the time of the marriage of James Tweed and Sally Gibson, James purchased the homestead in Wilmington, to which I have already alluded, and which was also known as “Nod,” into which he took his wife, and here was the commencement and germ of that ancestral tree of which we are all the branches. Here were born to this worthy couple, in natural and rapid succession, Sally (Buck), James, Nan-

cy (Harnden), Abigail (Walker), Samuel, Timothy Gibson, Mary (Jones), Charles, and Emmons. Of these nine children, two only are living, Mary and Charles, the former of whom is present.

The changes which more than three quarters of a century inevitably bring are many, yet this family was remarkable for the longevity of its members. Not one child died in infancy, which amply illustrates the fact that the utmost care and most watchful oversight of the tenderest of mothers was ever employed in rearing the little ones, who could and did, one and all, "rise up and call her blessed."

Although younger, of course, than any of this family of whom I write, my own recollections of and experiences with them date back considerably more than half a century. Nothing could exceed the happiness of the days of my childhood when permitted to visit Grandfather and Grandmother Tweed. The cordial greeting, the affectionate embrace, the earnest solicitude to anticipate every childish want, made an impression never to be effaced, and, I venture to say, never to be forgotten by any of us who have enjoyed these experiences.

It may be egotistical in me to mention the following, but I really believe I was somewhat of a favorite with these good people, and perhaps may be pardoned, therefore, in repeating the words which once came to me from Grandmother Tweed, through my dear old mother,— “Benny always was a proper good boy. HE never sarsed his grandma’am.” The compliment to me was great, but the reflection upon some of those who hear me is absolutely appalling.

I may here record that while Grandfather Tweed was the quintessence of good nature and almost the incarnation of all those qualities which go to make a man universally beloved, always, as he did, having the greatest consideration for the rights and feelings of others, your grandmother was full of that fire and vigor which left no uncertainty in regard to the fact that her word was law, and, although small in stature, she wielded great domestic power. A happy union of these characteristics, so strong in contrast, yet so harmoniously blended in “our uncles and our aunts,” will account for the excellent dispositions which are so prevalent everywhere among our relations, and make us

all feel that "it is good to be here" on this occasion.

As I write these lines I recall and can vividly see the various members of this family in their routine work on the farm. Hay-fields, corn-fields, and hop-yards all loom up before me; and the sound of the horn for dinner still dwells musically on my ear. I can see these uncles coming home in their shirt sleeves, each stopping at the well with its sparkling water and its creaking "sweep," just opposite the front door of the old house, and each by turns washing his hands and face in the "piggin," which was kept sacred for this purpose, and subsequently all sitting down and enjoying the tempting meal which dainty and loving hands had provided. Thus passed the days and seasons, and here for thirty-three years did this worthy and happy family dwell. In the mean time, of course, the sons and daughters married and moved, one by one, to other spheres of labor, although none of them immediately went very far away. After a short residence in Wilmington, Aunt Sally Buck removed to Stoneham, where nearly all her descendants always have

lived and still reside; James settled in Woburn; Nancy Harnden in Wilmington, where she remained all her life, dying only two years ago; Abigail Walker moved to Reading and afterwards to Lowell; Samuel went to Providence; Timothy Gibson to Lowell; Mary Jones to Lancaster; Charles to Woburn; and Emmons to Lowell, where he resided many years, although later he removed to Indianapolis, Ind., where he died in 1858.

The first death in this family was that of Abigail Walker, which took place on the 28th of March, 1855, she having then reached the age of 51 years. To say that she was a lady of great natural refinement, of a most genial disposition, and possessed of a character that commanded the admiration and respect of all, is but slightly to portray her many virtues.

“None knew her but to love her,
None named her but to praise.”

In the natural course of events, Great-grandmother Gibson, a second wife and the step-mother of Grandmother Tweed, was taken away by death. This, with other changes and circumstances, necessitated the removal of Grandfather

and Grandmother Tweed to Lunenburg, to take the care of her father, Timothy Gibson, and also of his son, Uncle Ben. The father had been a man of unusual activity and force, but was then quite aged and infirm. The son, "Uncle Ben," was a character, and always walked to church, some three miles, never deigning to ride. Although tradition would seem to imply that he was mentally peculiar, not to say erratic, still he was a man of no little originality, and whom, by the way, I am said to resemble not only in name but especially (as you who remember him may easily imagine) in literary and educational tastes, (?) if not in the still higher range of cobbling, chewing tobacco, and drinking hard cider.

Here Grandfather and Grandmother Tweed continued to carry on the farm, and here also proved to be for many years the headquarters for the children and grandchildren of this worthy couple. Here also were family scenes, equally vivid with those of Wilmington and much more recent; and here also were further days of happiness and comfort for the entire Tweed family.

It would be a pleasant task to recount the many incidents of their not altogether unevent-

ful life in Lunenburg, of no special account however at the time, but now full of interest, and to trace the progress of Grandfather and Grandmother Tweed through the years they resided in this place, but I must pass on.

In the natural course of events, it being on the 14th of September, 1832, Great-grandfather Timothy Gibson was gathered to his fathers, leaving Grandfather and Grandmother Tweed, and Uncle Ben, the only occupants of the Lunenburg premises. Here they continued to reside, Grandfather Tweed occasionally "going below" and driving the old cream colored nag, the ugliest and most treacherous, and at the same time the most valuable, piece of horse-flesh known in those days, to visit his children and grandchildren. This was before the days of the Fitchburg Railroad. It was a happy conceit of Grandmother Tweed to load the old gentleman down with a barrel of boiled apple sauce to sell to the relations. Once he came to Lowell with an ox-team and a load of charcoal, which in my early pride I remember to have helped him sell in the streets of that city at ten cents a basket, all the time as proud as Julius Cæsar, and very

likely with a face as black as Othello's, thinking of the success of this great commercial transaction. Of course grandfather went home with a barrel of flour—it cost \$5.00 in those days—and such other luxuries as the city afforded. The delight of his return was only equaled by the change in diet which followed.

This leads me to pay a passing tribute to our good old grandmother's cooking. It was in the days of open fire-places, when the long black crane was a fixture therein, and the teakettle hanging gracefully from one of the many hooks of various lengths, would simmer, and sing, and steam—what a bright old fellow Robert Fulton was to run a steamboat up the Hudson on the idea here suggested—and a huge brick oven was built in at the side, which would now look, in comparison with a modern range, like the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky. This oven in operation was a spectacle at once imposing and grand. Wood enough to have supplied the funeral pile of John Rogers, when he was burned at the stake, was crammed into it, creating a roar and crackling such as can be imagined at the burning of Rome. The bricks were heated

to their utmost capacity, after which the remaining embers were raked into the fire-place, and the oven cleansed by the process of using a damp cloth attached to a long stick. A huge wooden bowl filled with dough was placed in a chair at the mouth of the oven, when your grandmother armed with a gigantic wooden spoon, and, fired with a zeal which lent an unerring aim, landed little knots of this mixture all over the oven, and in as brief a time as it takes to give this description, there were ready and fished out, such rye drop-cakes as only a grandmother and a brick oven can produce. Their shapes were as varied as they were numerous, and the brown crisp edges were as picturesque and irregular as a range of the Rocky Mountains. No pen can do justice to their excellence as a breakfast cake, and no poet could adequately sing their praises when, sliced and dipped in the richest of cream, they appeared as toast at the evening meal. In those days "old rye" caused no prohibitory legislation, and ~~no~~ "license" to make rye drop-cakes was needed, except in the matter of temperance in the quantity to be eaten. I might multiply illustrations of this good old lady's culinary ability,

yet she persisted, in the latter days of her house-keeping, in saying that she had entirely "lost her faculty for cooking." I might also have added, in the proper place, that at each succeeding trip "down below," recently alluded to, your grandfather insisted, probably as a reason for us to buy, that "your grandma'am had got about done making apple sarce."

This family lived on, in the usual way, for several years, or until 1850, when Grandfather Tweed was taken suddenly ill, one night, and died. In due course of time Uncle Ben also departed this life. This left Grandmother Tweed alone, and after matters were finally adjusted, the farm passed into other hands. Grandmother Tweed removed to Lowell, and lived with her daughter "Nabby," my mother, until the death of the latter in 1855.

At this time grandmother removed to Stoneham, where she entered the family of Aunt Sally Buck, and here completed her long and useful life. She died in the year 1861, and her remains, with those of her husband, repose in the cemetery at Lunenburg, Mass.

In view of what I have written, and with a

sincere desire to do honor to the dead, this reunion has also been arranged in the hope that it may afford some gratification to the living. From a comparatively humble, yet most worthy source, stand before me, in goodly numbers, four generations of relations. Among these are gentlemen representing various branches of business nearly all of which are the growth of the progressive age in which we live. All of us, without exception, so far as I know, are respectable and hold honorable positions in the communities where we reside, and if none of us are fabulously wealthy, I believe we all have quite the equivalent, for the bible says, "A good name is better than great riches."

We are here today to renew friendships and acquaintances, as many of us, in pursuing our vocations in life, seldom meet, and to assure each other of our mutual friendly regard and personal interest.

Who has not felt the thrill which the fact of meeting a blood relation affords, and the inspiration which grows out of the knowledge that we as relatives have a claim upon, and, so to speak, a right to each other? So far as I know, this sen-

timent is universal among us. At any rate, my ideas of good feeling, good fellowship, good nature, good citizenship, and downright good people, are thoroughly exemplified in this family, of which I am proud to be a member, and my earnest desire, in bringing this desultory sketch to a close, is that we may cherish and cultivate those feelings and interests which just such gatherings as these cannot fail to inspire, and that we may live our lives in full harmony and sympathy with each other, leaving all at last, in the belief that whatever others may say of us, our kindred have always proved to be our steadfast and abiding friends. Many of us, indeed, have inherited other cognomens than that of this honored family, but

“Just as a Scotchman vaunts his plaid,
Where’er his wandering steps may lead,
Boasts of his clanship, feels his blood
Warm at the thought and quicker speed,
So here are we, of various names,
Who each his right of kinship claims,
And boasts, with pride, his bit of TWEED.”

RELATIVES PRESENT.

Timothy G. Tweed,	.	.	.	.	.	Lowell, Mass.
Gordon Tweed,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Brenda Tweed,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
George W. Tweed,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Henry Tweed,	.	.	.	.	.	Boston, "
Edwin Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	Lowell, "
Molly E. Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Martha Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Daniel B. Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Ned Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Ethel Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Mary Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	Groton, "
Gilman Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	Lawrence, "
Sarah K. Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Henry Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	Haverhill, "
Mabel F. Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Henry Perley Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Otis Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Alice M. Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Althea M. Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Florence E. Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Harry Foster Harnden,	.	.	.	.	.	" "

John W. Harnden,	Wakefield, Mass.
Emma A. Harnden,	" "
Arthur W. Harnden,	" "
Ida A. Harnden,	" "
Hattie Abbott,	Woburn, "
Clarence T. Abbott,	Boston, "
Elizabeth Jenkins,	Wakefield, "
J. W. Jenkins,	" "
Charles W. Jenkins,	" "
Martha Jenkins,	" "
Ethel M. Jenkins,	" "
Lizzie M. Jenkins,	" "
George Dane,	Lowell, "
Anna Dane,	" "
Mattie Dane,	" "
Mary Jones,	Stonham, "
Thomas H. Jones,	" "
Carrie Emerson Jones,	" "
Benj. Walker Jones,	" "
Lydia A. Jones,	" "
Addie E. Jones,	" "
John F. Jones,	" "
Frances L. Jones,	" "
Belle F. Jones,	" "
George Jones,	" "
Mary Jones,	" "
Charles Buck,	" "
C. F. Buck,	" "
Clara Buck,	" "
Joseph Buck,	Woburn, "

Sophia C. Buck,	.	.	.	.	.	Woburn, Mass.
Hattie J. Buck,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Joseph H. Buck,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Mabel F. Buck,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Willie A. Buck,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Grace T. Buck,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
John C. Buck,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Emma J. Buck,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
John E. Buck,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
George Green,	.	.	.	.	.	Stoneham, "
Mary Jane Green,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
George N. Green,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Minnie Green,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Willie C. Green,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Walter T. Green,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
A. M. Latham,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Esther J. Latham,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Harry M. Latham,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Abby Robinson,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Abby Maria Robinson,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Carrie Hayward Robinson,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Benj. Walker,	.	.	.	.	.	Lowell, "
Mary E. Walker,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Mary C. Walker,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Gorham Smith,	.	.	.	.	.	Salem, "
Walter Allen Smith,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Dorcas Berry,	.	.	.	.	.	Reading, "
Charles Berry,	.	.	.	.	.	" "
Abby W. Bancroft,	.	.	.	.	.	Boston, "
C. W. Pitman,	.	.	.	.	.	Wakefield, "

Emma G. Pitman,	.	.	.	.	.	Wakefield, Mass.	.
Marion Pitman,	.	.	.	.	.	"	"
Thomas Merriam,	.	.	.	.	.	Woburn,	"
Mary C. Merriam,	.	.	.	.	.	"	"
Florence C. Merriam,	.	.	.	.	.	"	"
Frank A. Merriam,	.	.	.	.	.	"	"
Grace H. Merriam,	.	.	.	.	.	"	"
D. Howard Robbins,	.	.	.	.	.	Wakefield,	"
Lizzie Robbins,	.	.	.	.	.	"	"
Marion Robbins,	.	.	.	.	.	"	"
Nancy Ethel Lewis,	.	.	.	.	.	"	"

INVITED GUESTS.

William H. Carter,	Wilmington, Mass.
Judith D. Carter,	" "
Maria W. Carter,	" "
Ada M. Carter,	Auburn, Maine.
Ellen Wheelock,	" "
Rebecca L. Blanchard,	Wilmington, Mass.
Harry Blanchard,	" "
Lillian Blanchard,	" "
Harriot G. Ames,	" "
Allie G. Ames,	" "
Henry N. Ames,	" "
Juliet S. Gowing,	Wakefield, "
Levi Manning,	Wilmington, "
Silas Brown,	" "
Abigail Brown,	" "
Minnie C. Gowing,	Wakefield, "
George Marden,	" "
Harriet Buck,	Ballardvale, "
Nathan J. Shattuck,	Winchester, "
Hattie M. Shattuck,	" "
Wallace G. Shattuck,	" "
Everett Daniels,	Stoneham, "

Mary Oates,	.	.	.	.	.	.	Stoneham, Mass.
Josie C. Hill,	" "
William F. Holt,	Wilmington, "
Vasti B. Holt,	" "
Louisa Swain,	" "
Kittie M. Gove,	" "

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